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THE TIMES LITERARY SUPPLEMENT DECEMBER 19 1980

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EDUCATION

Schools of thought

By Kenneth Minogue

JOHN PASSMORE:
The Philosophy of Teaching
299pp. Duckworth. £18.
0 7156 1031 7

G. H. BANTOCK:
Dilemmas of the Curriculum
146pp. Martin Robertson. £9.95.
(paperback, £3.95).
0 8520 310 2

JOHN ANDERSON:
Education and Inquiry
Edited by D. Z. Phillips
228pp. Blackwell. £12.
0 631 12531 0

"To be frank," writes John Passmore in the preface to *The Philosophy of Teaching*, "I have never been satisfied either by what I have written or by almost anything I have read about teaching." The reason he gives is that most books on education reduce either to strings of commonplace banalities or to self-righteous fanaticism. There is thus a kind of desperation in the question which follows: "Why should the fanatics have all the best tunes?" Professor Passmore characterizes his position as a middle way between the imaginative and the correct: "Dull, perhaps, like all attempts to find a middle way, but the correct view, often enough, is not very exciting; the best way of being exciting is to go wildly wrong, with massive over-simplification."

This melancholy common sense is, in fact, unfair to what he has called fanaticism. There are various ways of being exciting about a subject like education, and the writings of John Anderson illustrate one of them. This method consists of incorporating elements of melodrama and ideology into one's philosophy of education. Another way of being exciting is to ride abstraction so hard as to leave the complexities of the ordinary world behind: for why, it may plausibly be asked, should philosophers bother with such complexities? In fact, Passmore's own treatment is far from dull. *The Philosophy of Teaching* is a very good piece of work, even if it lacks the coherence displayed in some of his earlier books. There is nothing he discusses which he does not illuminate.

Why is it difficult to write a philosophy of teaching? Part of the

reason lies in the fact that ours is the most devotedly pedagogic civilization ever to have taken up space on the earth's surface. Even so simple a piece of entertainment as the cowboy film is awash with passages of instruction in such unlikely skills as shooting a horse or sneaking up on buffalo downwind. We are all passionate learners, and hence the project of philosophizing teaching, with its correlate learning, resembles fish trying to understand water.

Another part of the reason lies in the fact that, unlike other civilizations, we have no idea of a *summum bonum*. A civilization that thinks it knows what the good life is need hardly bother to think about education: it consists merely in teaching people how to lead that life. But since most philosophies of education incorporate a project for producing a certain type of human being, they run into immediate opposition from those who wish to produce a different kind of human being altogether. The pluralism of our politics is other words, a pluralism of our views of education. The result is that much in the philosophy of education consists in polemic directed at a shifting target. Sometimes it is the government, sometimes radicals, and at other times religious sectarians or capitalists of industry. As Passmore remarks: "Over the time during which I was composing the book, the character of my principal opponents has changed. I was at first arguing against the 'radical reformers' with their hostility to information, habits, the efficient exercise of capacities. Now the greater danger, as I see it, is once again coming from the apostles of utility, the bureaucrats, the regularizers." The reader may well be puzzled as to the identity of those "regularizers," but is otherwise likely to agree that Passmore is moving with the times.

There is a further problem about teaching which is at the forefront of G. H. Bantock's *Dilemmas of the Curriculum*. It results from the fact that the entire youth of the Western World is subject willingly to a long period of fundamentally literary and symbolic instruction. This artificial situation—artificial in the sense that it results from political and social imperatives rather than educational ones—generates most of the dilemmas that preoccupy Professor Bantock. If education is adapted to the whole

of the school population, it will fail to stretch the intelligent. If it concentrates upon the exactitudes of grammar and form, then it may crush a mysterious something which is prominent in educational thought as "creativity". If, on the other hand, the teacher tries to let the creativity out of the child he may find himself confronting a great deal of vacuous self-expression. If too many facts constrain, too few result in an idle and unstretched mind. It is little wonder that as the dilemmas multiply, teachers take refuge in either tradition or the current fashion, and the world of teaching begins to resemble *haute couture* in its feverish addition to being *à la mode*.

Bantock is a sane guide to the problems that arise in secondary education. After a rather breathless and bumpy historical introduction, he sketches out the main problems. The comprehensive undertaking he observes, "is the product of two contrary impulses, one seeking greater equality of opportunity, the other implying greater equality of outcome." And in dealing with the contradictions thus arising, he is critical of the way in which some educationalists equivocally upon the two senses of the word "culture"—one anthropological and one evaluative. The consequence of this equivocation is the argument that everybody already has a culture (as indeed everybody has, in the anthropological sense), and hence working-class children are, contrary to the whole point of education, trapped within the parochialities of their own way of life. Bantock has some excellent remarks to make upon the vague for inter-disciplinarity with its passion for projects, and upon the criterion of relevance, both of which often have the same imprisoning effect. The core of his book, however, is a defence of the view that academically less able children should have a more different sort of curriculum from that of the more academically inclined child.

The first condition of talking sense about modern schooling is to recognize the sheer strangeness of the modern situation. Bantock quotes Lawrence Stone on the modern conversion of childhood, physical activity, into a kind of sedentary book learning, often at odds with the familiar traditions of the child. The new situation trains

children in punctuality and regularity, but must also lead to a great deal of frustration and unhappiness. A further consequence of the new situation is that all educational practices, including the curriculum itself, are opened up to incessant public debate in which special groups with axes to grind attempt to gain their share of influence over that most desirable of objectives, the mind of the young. In such a situation, Bantock defends himself by tentativeness. "Clearly these suggestions are offered for debate in what has become a major twentieth-century problem—how can we cope with something new in the history of mankind, a total school population?"

It was undoubtedly easier when education was left to the educators, and the whole nation did not expend its dialectical resources agonizing about the effect on the next generation. John Anderson, for all that he died less than twenty years ago, seems like a voice from that past.

Anderson was, from his appointment to the Challis chair of Philosophy at the University of Sydney in 1927, a local gadfly who set about the unexamined lives of Australians with a Socratic enthusiasm. His horizon was the university itself and he was, as P. H. Partridge remarks, "as local as a magpie." His best work was in logic and epistemology, his more memorable flights in ethics, but neither of these virtues would have gained him a more than local reputation had he not also been able to generate, among his students, a considerable voltage of intellectual excitement. It might thus seem that he must be classed among Passmore's "fanatics." The question, however, is more complicated than it looks. For one thing, Passmore himself was both a pupil and a colleague of Anderson's. For another, we often think that exciting is the best thing an educator can do. This collection of essays about Anderson, and lecture notes and articles by him, assembled by D. Z. Phillips, reveals some of the reasons why he could inspire excitement, and also suggests some misgivings about this very power itself.

P. H. Partridge supplies the clue to Anderson's power to excite those he taught. He believed that philosophy was not just another specialism, but gave a necessary key to the understanding of science,

human nature, society and art. In his lectures on Spencer and Dewey, Anderson himself can be found arguing that the educated man is one who is not shackled by the assumptions of his society or group. Such a man sees things objectively, and Anderson goes on to insist that objectivity is not a mere passivity or receptivity. "It requires a criticism of principles if only because all of us have a tendency to fall into mere custom and uncritical living. . . . So our interest in objectivity will also have to work its way through obstacles in ourselves and others."

The great strength of this position lies in recognizing that education is an independent cultural activity which must, when necessary, resist incorporation into whatever schemes governments, churches, commercial firms or political organizations may dream up for it. At the same time, by affirming that objectivity—an interest in how things actually work—is the point of education, Anderson is well placed to deal with all types of unfashionable relativism which illogically advance doctrines purporting to show how we are the playthings of our culture, class language, epoch or some other unlikely abstraction. Such relativists, like the sceptics of seventeenth-century France, employ epistemological scepticism in the service of a dogma, and it was one of the great benefits of an Andersonian education that it made its pupils highly sensitive to any sophistry which operates by attempting to evade questions of truth.

But the clue to the other side of Anderson's excitement can be seen in the talk of being "shackled" by contemporary assumptions, and above all in the far from inadvertent remark that "all of us have a tendency to fall into mere custom and uncritical living", where the crucial point is in the choice of the last two words. Philosophy, that is to say, was concerned not merely with thinking, but with how we live. Anderson was thus not merely an academic philosopher, but also the exponent of a way of life, a kind of guru. He himself would have considered the combination unworkable, and the way of life he promoted can be summed up in the word "criticism" which was the shibboleth of the Andersonian movement. Those who could not pronounce it rightly were

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The numerate humorist

By Stuart Sutherland

JOHN ALLEN PAULOS:
Mathematics and Humour
116pp. University of Chicago Press.
£7.50.
0 226 65024 3

In *Anti-Intellectualism in American Life* Richard Hofstadter argues that one of the marks of the intellectual is a love of playing with ideas for the sheer fun of it. This activity requires a certain amount of detachment: it can be rather shocking to the serious-minded seeker after truth, who forgets that new truths can often only be reached by devious routes whose point of departure may be the denial of some belief formerly taken to represent absolute truth. Knowledge has been much advanced by individuals who were daft enough or playful enough to entertain such absurd notions as that the earth is not flat, that the sun does not go round the earth, that there is no absolute framework for space and time, or that parallel lines meet.

Humour often consists of a similar inversion of preconceived ideas. If the lower orders don't set up a good example, what on earth is the

Then Brown he read a paper, and he reconstructed there, From those same bones an animal that was extremely rare; And Jones then asked the Chair for a suspension of the rules. Till he could prove that those same bones was one of his lost mules.

Then Brown he smiled a bitter smile, and said he was at fault. It seemed he had been trespassing on Jones's family vault: He was a most sarcastic man, this quiet Mr Brown; And on several occasions he had cleaned out the town.

Dr John Paulos, a mathematician at Temple University, maintains in *Mathematics and Humour* that there is a close parallel between mathematics (including logic and formal linguistics) and humour. Like most other writers on the subject, some of whom are briefly quoted in the opening chapter, he has difficulty in laying down criteria for what is humorous. He maintains that humour always involves an incongruity, and that it must have a "point" (meaning, gist, nub). In addition, "the emotional climate must be right": he finds this "difficult to characterise . . . but . . . a subdued sort of aggression or self-satisfaction is often present".

He would have done better to delete the word "subdued", which is hardly applicable to Aristophanes or Groucho Marx: detached would have been a more appropriate epithet, since detachment enters into much humour, and satire ceases to be funny if the author is so involved that he wants the objects of his satire abolished rather than preserved as a subject for mirth.

At the broadest level, mathematics and humour are similar in that they are both forms of play: pure mathematics is well known to be completely useless unless it is applied, when it becomes applied mathematics, which in general is much less fun. Although Dr Paulos does not make the point, no application has ever been found for some forms of mathematics, including aspects of number theory and topology: they are the epitome of the intellectual at play. Moreover, just as the beauty of a mathematical proof depends on its elegance and brevity, so the best jokes must be economical and should avoid redundancy or irrelevant detail. Dr Paulos might have supported this point by citing the shaggy dog story which is the exception that proves the rule—it contains irrelevancies and redundancy precisely because it is a joke about making bad jokes.

As an example of some mathematical reasoning that is so brief, elegant and unexpected that it could justifiably be described as witty, consider the proof of Pythagoras's theorem illustrated in Figure 1. The four small triangles drawn inside each of the large squares have short sides of length *a* and *b*, and a hypotenuse of length *c*. The sides of both large squares are of length *a* + *b*. If the area covered by the four triangles is deducted from the top square, two small squares remain whose total area is *a*² + *b*²; similarly removing the triangles from the bottom square leaves a square of area *c*². Since the two large squares are equal and the same area (the four triangles) has been deducted from each, the remaining areas are equal hence: *a*² + *b*² = *c*².

The techniques of humour and mathematics often resemble one another in more specific ways. The reduction of absurdum is a standard method of proof. For example, to prove that there are infinitely many prime numbers, Euclid supposed that there was a number *x* which is the highest prime. If this prime number is multiplied by all the preceding primes, the new number *N* is created: but the number *N* + 1 must be a prime number since *N* is divisible by all the prime numbers

up to *x*, and dividing *N* + 1 by any of these primes will leave a remainder of 1. Therefore *x*, which was defined as the highest prime, is not the highest prime.

Again, the solution to a mathematical problem, like many jokes, often involves an element of trickery—a new way of looking at things. Suppose two trains starting 300 miles apart approach one another, one travelling at 100, the other at 50 miles per hour. A bird flying at 200 miles per hour leaves the first train as it starts, and flies backwards and forwards between the two: how far does it fly before it is crushed between them? If you find this difficult to solve, try working out how long it takes the trains to meet and how far a bird flying at 200 miles an hour would have travelled in that time.

John Paulos goes on to consider the paradoxes of self-reference. The impossibility of deciding whether the Cretan who says "All Cretans are liars" is telling the truth or lying is not only a joke, it points the way to important developments in the theory of logic, including Russell's theory of types and one of the most powerful and interesting results in the subject, namely, Gödel's theorem. There are innumerable jokes based either on

and uses the word "grue" to mean anything that was green before 1954 but blue thereafter. It can be objected that the usage is arbitrary since it depends on specifying an arbitrary date. But the rate that uses these words could be exactly the same objection against the use of "blue" and "green" in English: from their point of view, the word "blue" means "bleen" until January 1, 1980, but means "grue" thereafter. According to John Paulos, no resolution of this problem has yet been found.

Perhaps John Paulos's least convincing thesis is that the branch of topology called "caustic theory" is applicable to humour. Figure 2 shows a three-dimensional surface: the *x* and *y* axes, which are in the plane of the page, represent respectively the strengths of two different meanings that can be given to a string of words: the *z* axis at right angles to the plane of the page represents the degree of confidence which the listener ascribes to one or other interpretation. If the listener is at first led to believe more and more confidently interpretation 1, he may follow the path shown by the dashed line in the graph. Up to the point *p*, the sequence of words has pushed the listener towards that interpretation but from that point he is pushed towards interpretation 2 as reading; point *p* there is a sudden change from interpretation 1 to interpretation 2. A "catastrophe" has occurred, that is a sudden change in state. This change is represented in the diagram by the sudden drop from point *p* to point *c*. Note that in the region of the cusp, which interpretation the listener holds will depend on how he reached a given coordinate on the *x* and *y* axes: *b* and *c* have the same *x* and *y* coordinates but occupy different positions on the *z* axis.

There are two problems with this interpretation of humour. First, it is impossible to quantify the verbal push towards a given interpretation (the variables *x* and *y*), and hence no precise shape can be given to the surface representing a given first meaning. Second, although the model is a good one for the model, it is not a good one for the man. In a lecture, "In no language is it the case that a double no-utterance has a negative meaning", to which another philosopher at the back of the hall replied "Yeah, yeah".

Turning from mathematics to linguistics, John Paulos points out that one of the criteria used for determining the value of a syntactic theory is the extent to which it will resolve (by providing different grammatical interpretations for) ambiguous sentences such as "the shooting of the hunters was dreadful": the two interpretations depend respectively upon whether "the hunters" is taken as the subject or object of the gerund. Compare the story of the cannibal who, returning home late for dinner, is told "I'm afraid everybody's eaten".

Much of Lewis Carroll's humour depends on the fact that sentences having the same surface structure may be derived from different deep grammatical structures. "I'm sure nobody walks much faster than I do." "He can't do that," said the King, "or else he'd have been here first." Such examples fuelled the analytic philosophers. As Wittgenstein remarked, "When words in our ordinary language have prima facie analogous grammars, we are inclined to try to interpret them analogously; [hence] we misunderstand . . . the grammar of our expressions".

John Paulos ends his section on the humour to be derived from grammatical anomalies with the following puzzle. Suppose a certain race uses the word "bleen" to mean anything that was blue before January 1, 1980 but green thereafter,

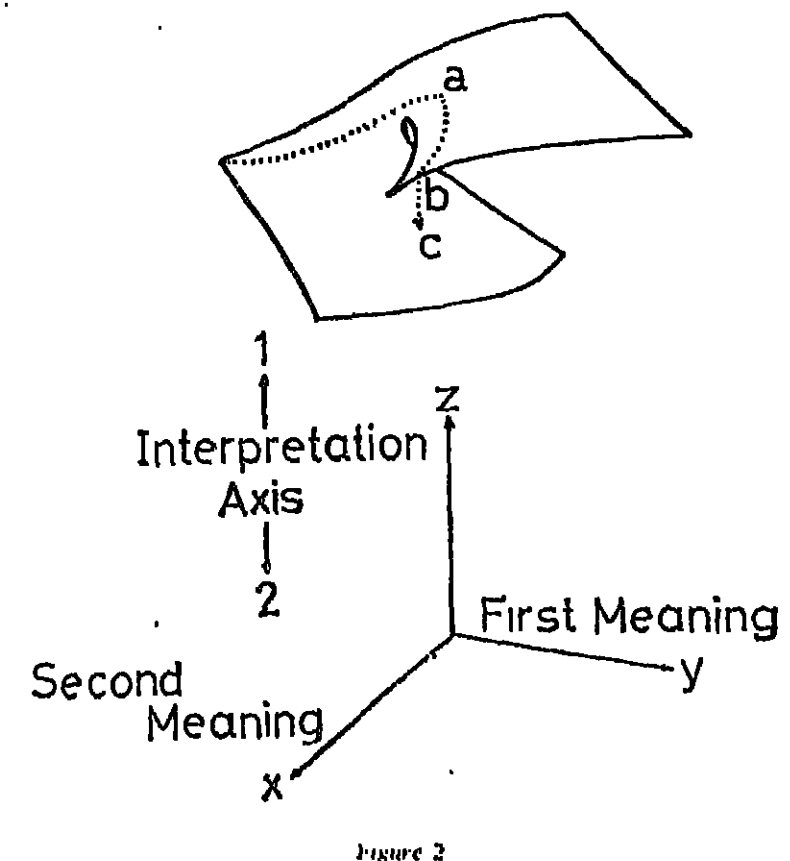


Figure 2

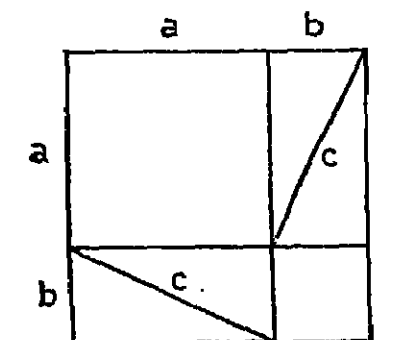


Figure 1

use of them? "A man cannot be too careful in his choice of enemies." Just as, to be acceptable, the inversion of an idea by a scientist or mathematician must lead to some new truth, so, to be humorous an inversion of ideas must have some point which may be the uncovering of a truth or may simply be the confounding of an opponent by revealing some unintended consequence of his arguments. Wilde was a man singularly without rancour, and most of his wit, as in the examples given, was of the former kind. The latter variety is exemplified in the now hackneyed "That depends whether I embrace your principles or your wife" and by Bréte Harte's account of the splendid battle of words between Brown and Jones that broke up our society upon the Stanley.

Now, nothing could be finer or more beautiful to see Than the first six months' proceedings of that same society. Till Brown of Calaveras brought a lot of fossil bones That he found within a tunnel near the tenement of Jones.

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By Russell Davies

JOHN FULLER
The Illusionists
144pp. Secker and Warburg. £3.95.
0 436 168 10 3.

John Fuller was a porcupine.
(This isn't strictly true,
But helps to get one's Arts in gear.
I think it's wise, don't you?)

In idle hours, he'd versify;
In idler hours, he'd read.
And, idler yet, he'd make a hat
You hadn't read what he'd.

And with what speed the man could read!
A friend of Fuller's reckons
Such were his powers, a Book of Hours
Would take him only seconds.

He'd learnt the laundry-lists of Pope,
You'd often hear him quote one;
He knew the Odes of Cecil Rhodes!
And Cecil never wrote one!

Oh, heaps of Keats, and creeps like Pops
He'd rendered into Norse.
Or Morse. No, Morse. Though Morse's gain
Was Morse's horse, of course.

The day I wish to call to mind,
John tumbled out of bed.
(He always tumbled, never stood,
So weighty was his head.)

"I'm Fuller beans," he felt, "today,
And Captain of my soul."
A train-bound Captain (week 1) was he,
And London was his goal.

"Some proofs have I to take to Town,
And proofs must not be late."
How could he know he'd undergo
A Fuller Brush with Fate?

As dawn breaks over Oxfordshire,
We find him on the station—
Still wearing his pyjamas and
Engaged in recitation.

"The King sat in Dunfermline Town,
Sipping a gin and tonic."
(You must excuse him while he takes
His morning macaronic.)

"My love is like a red, red rose,
Amor, Amor, Amor,
I wondered how as a shroud—
By Jove, I needed that."

For thus it was he aired the lungs,
And stirred the giant brain;
Portmanteau rhymes consumed the time
Spent waiting for the train.

At length the early train swung in
With many jolts and hoots.
The canny lady burbled (through
A wad of Opal Fruits):

"The trams approachin' Plaplor Wum . . .
But John paid little heed.
His mind was blending Comus with
The Athanasian Creed.

Alas for John! Life still goes on
While poets chew the cud.
He never saw the open door.
He only felt the thud.

Down-tumbled headlong-hupless-he
(I say, that's rather nice).
Like chestnut-under-spreading-trees
(I can't quite do it twice.)

Upon the platform's damp design
He appositely lay.
His form was most extremely plate
As Frogs are wont to say.

While John is sure he's premature,
By shuffling off the coil,
The Man Inside the Paper Van
Is heading to his toil.

His hand flings wide the door. He stoops,
He grasps a bundle there;
He heaves: a hundredweight of Sums
Come flying through the air.

Poor John was rising, limb by limb,
From this, his second bed,
When wump! This mighty paper weight
Alighted on his head.

"Alighted" isn't quite the verb.
Thought John, while falling backward,
"I fancy Pope would hit upon
Some less benighted hack-word . . ."

He only stopped to take a leak,
Or cough, or suck a Zube,
Till night, when friends would read to him
Along a speaking-tube.

And now (are you still there?) at last
We hold it in our hand:
The product of his labours in
That Hardly-Ever Land.

The best of rhymes, the worst of rhymes,
The classiest of metres . . .
(How neat if Rights had been Reserved
By Messrs. A. D. Peters!)

In chapters nine the story's told.
It takes some time accruing,
A trait J. F. exaggerates
By telling what he's doing.

"For if this Chapter feints," he'll say,
"Or lingers . . ." blab blab blab.
I wish he'd just got on with it.
However, there you are.

The target is the dealers' world
Of pictures, prints and frames.
It's tired and bored (but unexplored
By Clive "Verse Epic" James.)

The hero bears the name of Tim,
But not a lot besides.
We tend to hear much less of him
As onward Fuller glides.

But can he glide! It is a feat
To float the feet so fleetly.
They are, remember, Russian feet,
And must be shod discreetly.

The Pushkin stanza, you'll recall,
Is very far from free:
ABABCCDD
EPECCG.

Though Fuller makes this monster live,
To float the feet so fleetly.
They are, remember, Russian feet,
And must be shod discreetly.

Or yoga. It's too strenuous,
It pulls, constricts and chokes.
While bending over backwards it
Is hard to utter jokes.

Look for acrostics; quotes of course;
And palindromic names,
Plus multi-media parry scenes
(No real advance on James.)

As for the themes (deception, dreams),
They do survive, but battered.
As stories tend to emphasise,
It was the life that mattered.

The whole achieves what blurbists call
"A satisfying blend"
Though narratively (just like me)
It rushes at the end.

So, Did John Fall, or Was He Push-
kin? Has he made his case?
The answer, tripping off the tongue,
And falling on its face,

Is "Hm," I think. Or maybe "Ha".
A sly, judicious "Ho!"
Or "What a question, goodness me,
You crafty so-and-so!"

The moral is as hard to draw
As winning bets at Coral's.
For Fuller's done it all himself.
(The book is full of morals.)

But insofar and inasmuch,
And all that sort of fuss,
If some conclusion must be drawn,
It might go roughly thus:

That if you prove unfortunate
And fall down on the job,
And bow to horrid blackmail from
The pestiferous Blob,

By all means give him quantity,
But keep your best for you.
Don't give the bastard quality
When doggerel will do.

(John Fuller, incidentally,
Will sell the script to Texas.
O would that I could do the same,
Boo hoo. And Merry Xmas.)

Keeping up with the Goth-Joneses

By Janet Morgan

The Stretchford Chronicles
25 Years of Peter Simple
288pp. The Daily Telegraph. £6.75.
0 901684 5 7

Mischief is not too strong a word with which to condemn this sleeky subversive anthology. It could do untold harm to the innocent reader: the casual browser, say, who chances upon it between works of literary criticism and books about drink" as he meanders in the study of Kingsley Amis (who introduces this volume), or the earnest student, whose field work takes him into a library where he may mistake this book, its paper cover removed, for a companion volume to the *Annual Register* or a serious sociological treatise.

Why is this work so deplorable? For one thing, it is unacademic. Take the prefatory note, for instance, which is so vague as to be almost useless. It is from the subtitle that we have learnt that this collection consists of "extracts from the Way of the World column of the *Daily Telegraph*". The preface now tells us that the column first appeared on October 18, 1955. We are not, however, given the identity of the author, or authors, whom this pseudonym conceals. Indeed, the waters are deliberately muddied by the information that "other journalistic 'Yoricks' made their existence known, this pseudonym soon had to be dropped". Instead of Peter Simple was adopted and has been used ever since. But who is Peter Simple? The anxious reader is not told. In fact, the true state of affairs has been elaborately obscured by the clever device of inviting a Mr Michael Wharton both to append his name to the prefatory note and to write self-effacing letters to various newspapers denying that he has acted as "Peter Simple" for the whole period since "Yorick" was ditched.

This evasiveness is no light matter. Wary readers will want to be absolutely clear only about the identity and qualifications of any of the author of the material contained in this book but also of the editor who has selected the items which are the Way of the World column here. More than four million words of the Way of the World column have been published since October 1955; the volumes of selections have been published at intervals: this book is a further distillation of those earlier ones. What we are entitled to ask, were the criteria applied by "Peter Simple", if that was what it was, in these successive processes of selection? Is this a random sample or is it based on careful study? Is it the result of one man's scrutiny or has it been produced by a committee of generalists and experts? All we are told is that it represents "what I hope are the best and most representative items" in the preceding collections, "selected with additional items covering the period from 1977 to 1980". This is not good enough.

It is only the beginning. There are no chapters and only the rare heading indicating the decade or the year from which items are drawn, gives us an occasional bearing. We are not given the date on which each extract was first printed in the *Telegraph*; frustrated students of literary and sociological trends will not be disarmed by the easy assurances in the preface that items "appear in roughly chronological order, year by year, without further arrangement". At least Mr Amis's introduction allows careful readers to detect that the original newspaper column has been appeared on a Monday (October 18, 1955, was, incidentally, a Tuesday). Otherwise, the introduction is unhelpful to those who want to make a critical exposition by a self-confessed defect of the work in question; who speak of his own attitude to Peter Simple's work in some ways resembling "a clinical dependence". This is enough to arouse any scholar's suspicions. He will not be reassured by Mr Amis's assertions that this book "is a treasure-house of truth, fantasy and wit". He will want to know to his own conclusions about that.

Very difficult it is to top. In the

first place, many of the customary tools are lacking. There is no index, which makes things particularly difficult for readers who wish, for example, to check references to the work of the *Stretchford University's* Department of Theoretical and Applied Squatting, to the first performance of *de Sade on Ice*, or to the government report recommending the dispersal from London and resettlement of 31,500 civil servants, "pitiful hordes of involuntary nomads... wringing their ink-stained hands by the roadside; or, wheeling the pathetic equipment of their trade—filing cabinets, in and out trays, tea-making apparatus, desks and wastebaskets—bustled high in wheelbarrows, foretelling prams or make-shift cots".

There are other disappointments. Footnotes are not just missing from the bottom of each page—they are entirely absent. Dr Spacely-Trellis, for instance, author of *Good The Humanist*, pioneer of the "compulsive re-jigging of our religious production drive in the light of modern knowledge" (symbolized by the performance on the High Altar of the New Testament, a sample: "Please provide facilities, Jesus commented, for infants of pre-school age to associate with me whenever feasible. They can play a relevant part in the life of the future world community"). Dr Spacely-Trellis, the go-ahead Bishop of Beveland, baffling appearances are made by various members of the Goth-Jones family, with no explanatory apparatus to help us to establish precise relationships between, for example, Sir William Goth-Jones, Vice-Chancellor of Stretchford University (moving it with the times by coming involved in a particularly unsavoury scandal... when he was found, in a blemish, dressed in a woman's clothes, in a broom cupboard in one of the students' hostels"), Dr Ellis Goth-Jones, chairman of Nerdley (Staffs) Magistrate Court (where, as the admitted owner of a six-year-old Snail Popper, he regularly risks the derision of the accused, described as "motorist"), Dr Bernard Goth-Jones (Director of the Goth-Jones Drama Foundation), Dr Lloyd Goth-Jones (the eminent architect), Dr Freudling Goth-Jones (the erudite and social problematologist) and Dr Evelyn Goth-Jones (Medical Officer of Health for Stretchford and a director of Muleholge Chemicals). Missions will be equally exasperated by the scantiness of other references. No medical qualifications are listed for Dr Heinrich Goth-Jones, frequently quoted as an authority on such matters as the links between

the lack of shopping facilities and compensatory sex, marriage and home life.

No bibliographies are provided when mention is made, in 1970, of Sir Anthony Blunt, the much-loved Socialist art-historian, "besieged by thousands of tough miners, veterans of a score of cultural 'hot wars', weeping and pleading with him 'to take the lead in overthrowing the tyrants of Whitehall', or when passages allude to the works of Julian Birdthistle, author of the first 'avant garde' football novel, *The Disconnected*, sexuality, sodomy, heroin-addiction and psychosomatic diseases," heir of Saintsbury and Gosse," whose manuscript *A Bookman Remembers* would, if completed, illustrate depths unplumbed by *The Rise and Fall of the Man of Letters* (author, John Galsworthy, date and price not, needless to say, given). No graph accompanies the description of the astonishingly rapid development of the precocious child of Doirdre Dunt-Pauker and John Amour (the Leftist television documentary producer) their bemed six-year-old son Bert Brecht Mao Che Odinga, so that keen students of public affairs must, by leaping back and forth, establish for themselves the precise order in which differences occurred between members of the Socialist Royal Family, notably the Queen Gran and Duke Len of Erdington.

Such omissions are surely no accident, since in other respects great care has evidently been taken with the production of this work. The text has no misprints, the type is clearly and evenly set on thick, smooth paper, the selection for each decade is of just the right size, thirty pages from the 1950s, 135 pages from the 1960s, 135 pages on 1980—bringing up to a satisfying climax, with a neatly rounded coda. Why, then, are those who produced this book so airily negligent in other matters? There are two explanations, one uncharitable, one unkind. But, before we examine them, we should look, albeit briefly, at the content of this book. Peter Simple's puts before us, far that, as much as the manner of its presentation, is deeply worrying. As the preface mentions (and it is no more than that), the items included in this material are of varying sorts: "declarations of intent, nostalgic, nostalgic or nonsensical, the very best sort out which is which, is to distinguish fantasy from actual events, in puncture balloons d'essai without deflating justly-held opinions.

For this is an utterly confusing book. Fred Carapace could be a real trade union leader, a cousin

of Moss Evans perhaps. We may once have been urged to catalyse giving up our careers to engineers; even now a Covent Garden restaurant advertises that high chairs for Sunday luncheon are "kindly supplied by the Campaign for Children's Equality". Maybe it was to more metaphor to say that electricity was generated by the Scottish National Orchestra's performance of Mahler's Fifth Symphony: an enterprising scientist has recently run a lightbulb for a year on power supplied by a lemon. It is entirely possible that the owner of a Boggs Yobbo Cottage (1967) "interest in giving to decriminalization" and that a Porphyrogenous Sedan 1919 might contain, as well as a jewelled speaking tube, a roomy passenger section, a bar, a billiard hall, servants' quarters, a bath, a photographic darkroom, a sunken garden with lily pond, etc. Far-sighted entrepreneurs are at this very moment custom building similar vehicles, often disguised as "personalized vans" for wealthy customers.

Boiling Virgins and *Afternoon Tea* of Love, the therapeutically pornographic films of which a spirited defence is here supplied, have their counterparts in *The Perverse Couple* (after Congreve?), now on display in Central London, and in the (variously spelt) *Emmuelle* series, critically surveyed in a Sunday colour magazine some weeks ago. The concern caused at "Ethnic House, the 145 million headquarters" of the race relations industry, by a report of Lord Rothschild's Central Policy Review Staff, the outrageous, yet sinister, "Think Tank" which matched, daily, by similar flurries elsewhere, Julian Birdthistle's review of calendars (including the customary annual "figure-composition of Good Customers", a group of nude girls bathing in a forest surrounded by a heavily forested area, a traveller whose biscuit-covered motor-bulge with gay dresses on coat hangers", showing "the influence of Boucher and Pragonard" in a calendar "figure-composition" of "Good Customers", a group of nude girls bathing in a forest surrounded by a heavily forested area, a traveller whose biscuit-covered motor-bulge with gay dresses on coat hangers", showing "the influence of Boucher and Pragonard" in a calendar "figure-composition" of "Good Customers", a group of nude girls bathing in a forest surrounded by a heavily forested area, a traveller 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reminders

BY ERIC KORN

The wonderful progress of printing technology has not been without its victims, and the one that springs most readily to mind is Harper's horse—a quadruped, not a regiment. When, in 1833, the distinguished New York publishing house of Harper Brothers bought a new steam press, the horse-driven press became obsolete, and its power source was put out to grass at the Harper farm on Long Island. There the horse, although advised by benevolent retirement counsellors, found itself a suitable steed to serve as axis, and walked steadily around it from 7 am to 6 pm with an hour off for lunch, just as it had done all its working life.

This narrative comes, with a number of other good things, from *Publishers for Mass Entertainment in Nineteenth-Century America*, edited by Madeleine M. Stern (G. K. Hall, Boston), a collection of brief, sometimes too brief essays on nearly fifty of the publishers who brought America everything from a forty-three-volume set of the works of Scott and Dickens at \$10, to *Clarel's Love Story* by the author of *Thorns and Orange Blossoms* and *Her Only Sin*, by way of *Wild Bill, the Pistol Dead Shot*, or *Digger Don's Double*; *Personal Economy*, or *The Whole Art of Attaining Bulky Vigor*; *Physical Development*, *Beauty of Features*, and *Summary of Form* with the *Science of Dressing* and *Taste, Elegance and Economy*; and *The Ka-Khu-Klu Songster*. It is a tale of fortunes (few) and bankruptcies (frequent), of alighting buccanneries (deeds on the new Western Front of the mass market: when those boys pirated, they pirated and did not mess around), running off the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* without a by-your-leave was just a warming-up exercise.

Finances were obscure. The public benefited (John B. Alden sold paperback Shakespeares at 3c a volume); authors, generally, did not (Matthew Murray Ballou's \$767,000 royalty on *Gleason's Pictorial Entertainment Room Companion* included only \$28,000 for contributors, about \$62 per issue). Cover prices were a joke: books marked a dollar started out at 10c, a dime, a practice, incidentally, which carried into this century the advertisement of the back of *The History of Mr. Polly*, trumpeting the price of 4d demanded for the ordinary "six-shilling" novel.

The compilers have done a valuable job, charting a course through this shifty ground, where yesterday's rock is today's quagmire, and names and alliances shifted daily. One of the more spectacular metamorphoses was the splendid Miriam Follin, in turn the wife of David Peacock, Ephraim Peacock, and the publisher Frank Leslie. From *Frank Leslie's Chimney Corner*, Frank Leslie's *Ladies' Gazette of Fashion*, Frank Leslie's *Budget of Fun* and others (himself né Henry Carter of Ipswich). When Leslie/Carter died, she changed her name legally to Frank Leslie and took over the ship, still finding time to marry, briefly, Oscar Wilde's brother and change her name, with doubtful justification, to the Baroness de Bazus, before dying and leaving two million dollars to Women's Suffrage. Well, the Copyright Act of 1891 and the Copyright Act of 1893 put an end to much of this: but the spirit of Harper's Horse plods on.

Not wishing to emulate that horse, and mindful of the Government's restraining advice about industrial relations and not being a burden on them and all, I have been reading Sandra Leiblum and Lawrence Pervin's *Principles and Practice of Sex Therapy* (Tavistock Press, 408 spicy pages for only £16; and its hard cover, too, for your mates with rib and loach). They make how come yet making like a college professor, coming about those "weighty tomes". But won't they go green with envy when they see that magic three-lettered word on the spine, *sex*?

Being myself firmly of the opinion that sexual matters should be discussed, if at all, in a forthright and unadorned manner, I was surprised to find that many of the chapters were written by

Pervin and Leiblum. There on the very duster of the first chapter, the question I'd always been afraid to ask: "What do sex therapists do? How much success do they have? What is the stars?" And what a mouth-watering menu: "the reader will find practical (my italics, hereafter used to indicate a future judge in the purulent ribs) knowledge of how, when and why to use such therapeutic methods as sensate focus, systematic desensitization, cognitive therapy, imagery, paradoxical intention, group approaches, conjoint marital therapy, social skills training and psychodynamic psychotherapy".

The foreword by Dr H. L. Lief, the kind of name that calls for the sort of cheap mockery with which the TLS's pages should not be sullied, encouragingly suggests that sex counselling could be practised by a wide variety of folk like nurses and clergymen (reviewers and anti-censorship bookshelves are not mentioned but there can be little doubt that they were in Dr Lief's mind too). Dr Lief says that when he kept coming into his mind the word "humility" (guffaw). Then Pervin and Leiblum take over to announce that "interpersonal psychological phenomena are reflected in hormonal events" and that they are fascinated by "what we have termed the psychobiology of the dyad" (so was Blake, though he spoke of the lineaments of gratified desire). They point out defensively that "sex therapy is not always brief and not usually linear" (saloon-bar giggle); many people erroneously think that sex therapy is the routine execution of established prescriptive procedures, in actuality involves the skillful assessment and selection of considered intervention designed to facilitate behavioural and effective change.

Different strokes for different folks, in fact, and feeling that I had learnt something already, I went on to sympathetically of the lineaments of gratified desire. They point out defensively that "sex therapy is not always brief and not usually linear" (saloon-bar giggle); many people erroneously think that sex therapy is the routine execution of established prescriptive procedures, in actuality involves the skillful assessment and selection of considered intervention designed to facilitate behavioural and effective change.

an additional problem with using normative data as a criterion for diagnosis is that in order for individuals should be assessed with reference to the norms most relevant to them. . . . For example, what are the norms for masturbation, intercourse and other sexual activities among male middle-aged religiously active Catholics in Suffolk County on Long Island?

LoPiccolo, does not stay for an answer, but never mind, it's a darling question, and don't let them fob you off with any non-meaningful comparisons, as for example, with agnostic Turkmen shepherd boys on their return from the summer grazing in the high Pamirs.

But LoPiccolo has answers too: low sexual desire goes with depression, Catholicism, dysfunction, unresolved marital problems and aversion to sex. All this can be established by means of the SII or Sexual Interest Inventory, the Sexual Arousal Inventory, the Hoon, Hoon, and Wince (who thinks up these names?), the Zung Scale, Anon's Sexual Fear Inventory (the changed his name from Anon for fear of misunderstanding), Nowinski's P. Questionnaire, Helman's Measure of Psychosexual Development and Mosher's Sex Guilt Scale.

Anyway, there are lots of good tales in the book, one of my favourites being the story of Tom and Betty. Tom and Betty were fairly well adjusted, but they heard from friends about the new thing, orgasm: that the therapist had

developed and they decided they could like to have one fitted to their marriage. Investigation showed that while Tom did not have any on, tennis did, but it had been his habit to "disengage himself from tennis before having any type of intimate contact"—i.e. by taking a shower. Instead, their doubles coach, as you might say, suggested that Betty bring her racket into the bedroom and swing it about a bit for a few minutes: it worked like a charm for Betty, but Tom still had a problem—there was not room for them both to bring their rackets to bed. But a year later things had got better, and they kept the racket over the conjugal couch as a sort of memento.

Anyway, I have to keep a few secrets of the trade, so I am not going to tell you what to do about your PS (Premontory Sensations) if you suffer from PE or, worse still, RE, nor how to apply the Semans technique (I am making this up), nor the distinction between desensitization nor when to turn to psychodynamical psychotherapy (i.e. if all else fails lobotomize the filthy perverts).

I had just stopped for tea and biscuits at Madeline's Café (it used to be called "Chez Swann and Guevara") and was waiting my turn at the nearest videngames (Rapid, Hologram, Brain Tumour), when I stumbled wildly that inside every literary person there is a head waiter, waiting with napkin on arm to tell you what is on the menu and why you should enjoy it.

I have certain ambitions in the entrepreneurial direction myself, the most overweening being my plan for a gigantic globular restaurant in Hyde or Central Park, its surface a gigantic relief map of the world crisscrossed by catwalks and chair-lifts for the obese, while under its surface thousands of boughs serve food appropriate to the region. The problem is that you will end up with a great soup of Siberian and Pacific Island cuisine, unless you can create a vine for long pig boats ("the ribs were fine but all that pheasant turns me up") and whatever Siberian cat (baked kamchatka with a soupçon of salt and a certain Yenisei) less grandiose, I plan a cheap-nourishment emporium selling casseroles, daubes, soups, and Mongolian and Lancashire hot pot, a sort of brotherly or brotherhood, to be called "The Stews"; a few scientific kaffeekeeters ("The Cat's Pudding"; "The Urinary Gorrilla"; "The Gratin Agogo"; "The Salad of the Bad Café"); and a chain of pancake houses—"The Load of Crêpes"; "The Crêpe Hangar"; "Crêpe Soul" (with childlike and confidant) and a Chinese take-away, called—of course—Crêpes de Chine." It is, that last one could have a whole range of those celestial snacks called "Dim Sum": Dim Sum, ergo non cogito.

Meanwhile, since listmaking is fashionable, here is a genuine one, more in the nature of a found poem: Beans Cabbage Cauliflower Broccoli Artichokes Macaroni or Kindred Italian Pastos Soup (except Beef Tea) Omelette Scrambled Eggs Jam (except in small quantities) Scotch Kale. It is a list (from *Soyers' Paper Bag Cookery*, 1911) of things that cannot be cooked inside paper bags. Everything else, including Irish Kale with small quantities of jam, fried, poached and shirred eggs, and Albanian tagliatelli, can.

And seasonal seasonings to follow: sufferer, including the man who said "I am enclosing a chapter from my unpublished novel because of your unique position in the English World of Letters" (my name, added in pencil), was mislaid, and the lady who writes from the indefensible folk of Ebbington, to whom I address the question: "Yur then, who put pig on no wall to watch the band go by?"

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The Season in Scarborough 1923

For Martin Amis

Inches below
her sagging meaty
the suitcase

lap forgotten,
light as an egg
blown by a brook . . .

Six months
among the rich,
so many years ago:

the silver blister
on the kedge
for breakfast,

the bidet
and its replica,
the avocado

(halved,
then served
with vinaigrette)

were themes
for letters home
on headed sheets.

No mention
of irate saucepans
letting off steam,

the snappy ghost
of cigar
in the washing up . . .

Plus-fours, plunks,
expensive Turkish
cigarettes

made home absurd
with vulgar wigs
in wire hairnets.

She felt herself
a debutante,
drapping curtains

to the haugues
put out at night
for polishing

and she loved
her linen tina
pinned in place.

On odd days off,
she rode the fountain
up and down

the South Cliff,
two French phrases
aromatic

in her mouth:
the far-away feel
of Es-tu seule?

like the thought
of someone
touching her breasts . . .

As I sit
on the train
to literary London,

my season ticket
about to expire,
I think of her

the afternoon
she packed her things,
suddenly

homesick
for the real . . .
Why is it

rummy ulcers
on some suburban,
sodden golf course

can dazzle me,
as if I were
her dusty suitcase,

dreaming cardboard,
startled open
by the plosive locks?

Craig Raine

Not Match of the Day

By Richard Osborne

The Impresario
BBC TV

Der Schauspielfreier was written as an after-dinner entertainment for guests of the Emperor Josef II. Musically it is vintage Mozart of the Figaro period, rich in brief presentation of things to come. In the scene of the opera, we glimpse Anna and Elvira, twin manifestations of Giovanni's divided psyche; in the Impresario himself Don Alfonso is glimpsed at, arbiter and entrepreneur, at once ironic and urbane.

Sadly, Gottlieb Stephanie's play is no masterpiece. Alongside earlier explorations of behind-the-scenes theatrical intrigue by such practised manipulators as Goldoni and Metastasio it seems heavy-handed, and so it must have seemed on that February evening in 1786 in the Orangerie at Schönbrunn alongside *La marta e la perla*. The music for Casti's piece was by Mozart's rival, Salieri. His fee was 100 ducats, Mozart's fifty, the payment itself in ironic enactment of the very topic at issue in the drama. Mozart did so generously set. Such ironies are commonplace in Mozart's life.

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We looked in vain for parallels of this kind of thing in the television adaptation by Francis Coleman and Kenneth Corden. An intelligent revision of Stephanie's play, such as we might once have encountered on BBC2, would have deliberated over rival readings of real people rather than fall back on the puerile jokes and negligible impersonations of the script (Villem Tausky, *Baron*, or the very uninteresting *Christie*, billed as *Elisabeth*), an intelligent revision would have built fine verbal cadences around some of Mr Corden's *Baron*—the unions, claque, spongers—but we might hope to hear something, too, of the Marxists who currently populate the operatic world, of the avant and derriere guard. As the late Gerard Hoffmann so aptly pointed out the way, not such things as the recipient's silences of Cage and Pinter are the subject for witty surmise?

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ances of Albion: Dark Night Glad Day
Royal Opera House, Covent Garden

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While the score is intimately related to the verse, the ballet's affiliation is very free. Certainly in the exquisite and erotic pas de deux danced by Rosalyn Whittan and

nose and wheel them in tumbrels to his courtly charade?

All this is a long way from earlier re-writes of *The Impresario*, Eric Blom's version, witty and beautifully styled as to period, imitated of utterance, became a brittle interlude, while Giuseppe di Stefano lolled and gesticulated on a bank of cushions. The glorious Trio was taken too quickly by the dim orchestral sound; it revealed itself, nowadays quite voiceless, unable to articulate lines—full of "admirable gallantry"—properly sung, take us forward to the world of *Così fan tutte* and those ironic arbitrations of Don Alfonso. In the event, *Così* appears not in spirit but in fact, anachronistically quoted as credit-fodder at the end of a production which cannibalized Mozart and cheapened opera.

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commentary

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By Richard Osborne

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Take the money

By John Kerrigan

The Merchant of Venice
BBC TV

Audiences can be an embarrassment. I remember a performance of *The Merchant of Venice* at the Liverpool Playhouse in which a schoolboy shouted to the undecided Bassanio, "It's in the undecided! But if Shakespeare's plays are risky with audiences, without them they are half-dead things. The television director of Shakespeare must find an alternative way of creating this crucial sense of performance. He needs somehow to make his viewers drop the assumption that what flickers in the corner is not drama but cheapened reality. This Jack

Gold might have used a variety of camera techniques to expose the artifice of the screened spectacle and reveal subtleties within it which a theatre audience, restricted to a single point of view, would miss. As it is, he has preferred a montage of head-and-shoulder portraits, unflinching and gentle, so that his viewers get the impression that they are looking through their own eyes at a slice of sixteenth-century life. This flattering impression is encouraged by Raymond Hughes's gorgeously palatable costumes and, rather less successfully, Portia's pyramidal and the "say bank of Act 5 is too obnoxious" (a rumpled carper), by Oliver Haydon's sets. The Veronesian authenticity, once the Renaissance Italy, Gold and his designers show Venetian blinds over Shakespeare's play.

That something nevertheless comes across is a tribute to the actors, and in particular to Warren Mitchell. He is a stunning Shylock. Laughter is central to his performance: it begins with Jewish black humour in the proposal of the near-hysteria in "Hath not a Jew eyes?", and percolates, drips in the court-room suggestion that Shylock's hatred of Antonio comes as naturally to him as urine to man who hates and hates the woolen bawls. In Mitchell's hands, laughter not only undercuts, it usually thought incongruous; it integrates Shylock with the comedy which surrounds him with a sacrifice any of his venom.

The whole cast is strong. There is Gemma Jones's superbly various Portia (tremulous with Bassanio but so precise and forceful as the lawyer to the Mercy speech), Kenneth Cranham's brash Gratiano, a slightly sentimentalized Antonio from John Franklyn-Robbins, and a Richard Morant and Leslie Udwin so electrically aware of each other that one is left in no doubt as to why John Rhye-Davies and Alan David claim that the salads, Salerio and in the whole Shakespearean canon—Lancelotti and Enn Reito is a lively Lancelotti, particularly memorable for his belly-rumbling representation of the fiend—an excellent, though doubtless unintentional, parody of Jonathan Pryce's old mole.

What the production most obviously lacks is a sense of money. It concentrates on love, and pains off wealth as beauty and glamour. In a revealing slip, Gemma Jones wishes herself "A thousand times more rich, ten thousand times more rich", reversing Portia's priorities and missing Shakespeare's hint that regard for her—however exalted it may become—will always include the hard financial ingredient evident in his first mention of her to Antonio: "In Belmont is a lady richly left, and she is fair." Time and again, the actors emphasize the play's emotional as

1980

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commentary

Remembrance of films past

By Nick Roddick

Stardust Memories
Various cinemas

Woody Allen's new film is a portrait of the artist as not-so-young man. During a weekend seminar in the faded splendour of the Stardust Hotel, a film director called Sandy Bates (Allen) re-visits some of his movies and confronts a few critics' reactions (mainly that the old ones were better because they were straightforwardly funny), grapples with studio executives who want to tack a happy ending on to his latest movie, thinks back on his relationship with the neurotic Diary (Charlotte Rampling), and flirts earnestly with a classical violinist called Daisy (Jessica Harper). He also (in a flurry of flashbacks, flashforwards and fantasies) relives childhood memories, recalls or invents a visit to his sister (whose husband spends all his time, including during heart attacks, on an exercise bicycle in the bedroom); gets shot by young man in a field, dies and attends a posthumous tribute; and returns to the empty viewing theatre to pick up his dark glasses.

Stardust Memories is not precisely autobiographical: the clips from Bates's old movies are not

from Allen's old movies. One morose sequence, in which police with dogs pursue Sidney Finkelstein's escaped "hostility"—a massive, hairy beast briefly glimpsed assaulting Sidney's mother—looks like a long-cherished idea too outrageous to fit even the loose structure of a *Take the Money and Run*, while the clip we see from Bates's new film—a group of dejected partygoers wandering along a beach dump ("Seagulls and dead cars?")—belongs to the kind of bad existentialist "art" film that Allen has not in fact been making.

On the other hand, the film focuses clearly on him. It must sometimes be difficult for Allen to decide whether he is making a living by being funny about neurosis, or by being neurotic. "I don't feel funny," he says in an early scene. "I look around at the world and all I see is human suffering." Human suffering doesn't sell tickets in Kansas City, retorts his agent. But Allen wrote both lines, even if he only speaks one. And although the signs are that *Stardust Memories* may not be selling tickets in Kansas City, it is both about suffering and funny—probably Allen's funniest film since *Sleeper*—with its extraordinary parade of vignettes like fire to the oven, the dead guy who gets arrested for mail fraud in the middle of a trip, or the gaunt extras who people most scenes.

In passing, Allen pays tribute to all his old mentors. There are

memories of Fellini, Bergman and even Godard: the opening sequence is a reworking of *8½* (a recurring reference point) with a touch of *Wild Strawberries*, while Marie-Christine Barrault's "You love those dark women with all their problems" echoes her debut role in Rohmer's *Ma Nuit Chez Maud*. Such references are not essential to the movie, but they are obviously a part of its genesis: Allen's memories are tormented, somewhat anachronistic and resolutely personal—those of an American generation whose past was not all sodas and pretzels and beer.

"They document their private suffering and try to pass it off as art," complains one critic after watching a sequence from Bates's new movie (which is also, slightly perversely, the beginning of *Stardust Memories*). Unlike Bates's— and notwithstanding the complaints within the film—Allen's film is consistently funny. It is also, more even than *Manhattan*, extremely beautiful. Gordon Willis's black-and-white widescreen cinematography is magnificent, breaking up the aged creak of the screen with horizontal and vertical highlights, shadows and silhouettes, the curves of ceilings and the sweep of staircases. Very different from the current vogue for muted, blended colours, Willis's work provides the perfect counterpoint to Allen's vision: a front view of a comic world which, one way or another, has to be taken seriously.

Dreams of films future

By Julian Barnes

Television Times
Warehouse Theatre

You can usually judge seniority among television personnel by the state of their sneakers. Nick Croucher, a keen but wary young writer, a knowing ingenu with only Cambridge and the Somerset Maugham award behind him, arrives in a producer's cubicle with his tennis shoes still adorning his Meltonian. Mark Cruven, a director of several years' standing, an effervescent depressive with the air of a peevish Lou Macari, sports deeply bagged tennis shoes which have clearly seen a million battles about artistic integrity, casting and expenses. The sort of tennis shoes which patter on your knuckles as you cling to the rung below.

Peter Prince's sneakers (not to mention those of director Stephen Prears) must also have seen some wear in their time. He descended into the swirling hell of television some years ago (initially trailing the Somerset Maugham award), since then he has written several television plays and, most recently, the script for the excellent *Oppenheimer*. In *Television Times* he presents the business with the appalling fascination of one in love with it: you believe him not just about the sartorial semantics but about the character of his world and the motivation of its unengaging inmates.

At the core of his play is a tight quartet of friends—director, producer, actor, writer—who have been together, one guesses, for about ten years. To outside eyes they would appear (and would make themselves appear) successful: they are currently at work on a big-budget, fifteen-episode, drama-dog, modestly titled *United Kingdom*. They share a common past (frustratingly re-peatedly to a play called *Fortunes of Power and Vengeance*, whose success each attributes solely to himself), and nervily plan a common future: they dream of "getting the movie made" and have even bought the necessary book for it. There is one of those professional friendships fuelled by a constant pickering which normally indicates deep, sentimental loyalty.

Except that in this case it does not. During location work in Italy the quartet, Paul Prior, cracks up and sends himself being "kissed by the 'politely' ambitious" Croucher (the rising generation attacks on two fronts; his wife has just taken

up with a juvenile of twenty-two—the same age as Croucher). While the rest of the team get drunk, smart coke, and produce what they half-dispise, this quiet, cunning invader the centre of the play, and then gets mugged. In a subtly weighted and increasingly frightening scene, Prior invites Croucher to his hotel room and tries to warn him off; then to flatter him off; then to beg him off.

The older writer, played with wolfish abandon and worrying puller by Karl Johnson, swerves between arrogance and self-pity, and suddenly begins to scuff sleep-losing pills. He does this in a teasing, leering way, half-fondling, half-dorling Croucher to stop him. Are they really sleeping pills? Does he or doesn't he mean it? Is it some grotesque test of Croucher's perceptiveness about people? The younger writer's dilemma is both a "should he interfere, and being shown up a naïve, or should he permit a disilluminated rival to exercise his (admittedly drunken) free

will? By the closing scene, a comic rondo at the BAFTA Awards ceremony, Croucher now a velvet-jacketed cocktail has supplanted Prince and the group are moving on to *The Red Badge of Courage*. Not that this brings them any nearer the American dream: "Fantasia" at the set in Virginia, isn't it? "Wales." Soon, one imagines, the fantasy of movie fame will become set in aspic, the capricious of the group will refuse on retelling, or absorbing, the next wave of Croucher's Prince's stance is sardonic; his play is funny and constantly diverting. In places it feels too-sided and under-characterized (especially the parts of the producer and the actor); but even in those places it is carried through with splendid attack. It's the sort of play to advantageously take her telly-struck daughter; and she might choose to sum it up as Prior sums up Croucher's novel: "Quite a luck—black, cruel, heartless—it had everything."

Wasp Nest

Be careful not to crush
This scalloped tenant:
Who knows what secrets
Winter has failed to find
Within its paper walls?

It is the universe
Looking entirely inwards,
A hanging lantern
Whose black light wriggles
Through innumerable chambers

Where hopes still sleep
In her furry paws,
The chewed dormitory
Of a forgotten tribe
That tapered its wooden pearl.

It is a basket of memories,
A museum of dead work,
The spat Babes of summer
With a marvellous language
Of common endeavour.

Note: it is the fruit
Returning to the tree,
The world becoming a clock
For sleep; a matrix of pure
Energy, a book of many lives.

John Fuller

Primitive
magic

By Frances Spalding

Jacob Epstein
Century exhibitions

The celebrations of Epstein's centenary this year have been difficult and mostly unnoticed. The man was acknowledged in four places: The Ben Uri Gallery mounted a show of bronzes and drawings; the Museum of Modern Art and the Tate Gallery mounted a show of his work; while Anthony d'Ottavio showed for a fortnight in November (a third was promised but proved too large to be included). Finally, in December, there is a comprehensive display drawn from his own collection, seventeen works ranging in date from 1908 to 1951.

Epstein pioneered the introduction of "direct carving" and modern subject matter in British sculpture. While most public museums of his day attained a consistent level of innumerable dull commissions, his intense controversy that sculpture should be a new importance. His vigorous vitality found in his autobiography animates his models and busts and gives assertive directness to his carvings. But at the Tate Gallery's display makes apparent, the two media with their different traditions and opposite processes sharply divide his achievement.

Pound said that Epstein's carvings have an "austere permanence," this sense of stasis is achieved in the compressed, semibust-like forms of the sculptural doves at the Tate. The swirling rhythms in the female figure in *Flora* back into the shape of a question mark as the body is thrust forward and the spine curves back. Both have an imperious, almost regal quality, and a haunting, dreamy, infatuated Arthur, the whole being softly but richly lit. As if to complete the Dutch connection, there is a copy of the Dutch translation of *Adam Bede* (1870), with an engraving of Letty.

More evidence of how George Eliot affected her contemporaries is offered in the small section devoted to her contemporary with more respect, though usually of a muted kind, than it commands among critics now. There is an American edition of *O May I Join the Choir Invisible* . . . and other favorite poems (Boston, 1884) with an illustration showing a pensive young woman sitting at a window looking upwards and outwards.

A few critical comments have been chosen to complement the exhibition. There is Virginia Woolf's *Journal* of the same year. There are the few English novels written for grown-up people, and Henry James's lofty remarks about her "artificial plots" and "weak conclusions", balanced by his praise for her extension of human sympathies and her "firm delineation of individual character". These comments, while undoubtedly characterizing some aspects of George Eliot's work, tend to endorse the view of her as a woolly moralist—a view which, as the organizers note, led in the early years of this century to an unfair dismissal of her achievements.

Fortunately, though, we also get some glimpses of the impulsive, often unorthodox woman in her relationships with both men and women. It is perhaps a pity that there is nothing here of Mary Ann Evans's early (embarrassing) evangelical sentimentality in letters to female friends or of the sentimental and passionate homage paid to George Eliot (and accepted by her) in her later years by youthful female admirers. Nor is there any mention of the near-engagement to an obscure decorator in 1845 or the probable affair with John Chapman, in whose house she lived when she first came to London in 1851. But there is the chronological account of "Miss Evans" recorded in George Combe's *Journal* of the same year. There are the "very large brain . . . rather small in the regions of Comb[ination] and Philop[ro]gen[ity]".

To turn from Epstein's carvings to his modelled work is to exchange primitive magic and religion for vivid realism, buried movements for surface animation, the tactile for the immediate. His busts and portraits vary considerably in quality. The self-portrait in clay, the head of a woman, the head of a man, exhibited at the Ben Uri, grow more expressive through their restraint. But the mood suggested often dilates on one characteristic other shade of expression conveyed by the impression conveyed by the bust of Elzabeth, the emerging bust of Elizabeth, the bust of Epstein stretches the facial features, exaggerating eyes, forehead, with thick lips. The emphasis on the modelling, which is evident in the bust of Epstein, is pathetic. He always raises the face and one is forced to attend to its energy and expressiveness.

commentary

Combative, amative, philoprogenitive

By Rosemary Ashton

George Eliot, 1819-1880
British Library

The George Eliot who emerges from this small but richly documented exhibition is chiefly the professional writer, the painstaking student of sources, the wise author who affected her generation sentimentally and morally. It is understandable that this should be so. Given the holdings of the British Library—the manuscripts of all the novels except *Scenes of Clerical Life*, as well as the quiveries and commonplace books for some of them—it was obviously right for the organizers to display prominently examples of George Eliot's work in progress. Thus there is the quarry for *Romola*, with its list of required books on fifteenth-century Florence, most of them marked with a cross to indicate that they were in her and G. H. Lewes's extensive library. A cancelled manuscript passage from *Rebecca* indicates that George Eliot was aware that her gift for large social observation (the passage deals with the habits of the "old-fashioned Trebians", i.e., inhabitants of Treby Magna) might sometimes hold up the progress of the narrative unwarrantably.

The effect of her works on Victorian readers is eloquently suggested by two of the most interesting exhibits: paintings by Edward Henry Courboul, commissioned by Queen Victoria in 1861 and now owned by the Queen, illustrating scenes from *Adam Bede*. One is "Maggie Morris Preaching", exhibited beside the corresponding chapter in the manuscript. The other, "Letty Sorrel and Captain Donthorne in Mrs Poyser's dairy", interestingly combines an attempt at Dutch realism—tubs, churns, stonks, and Letty's "black patterns"—with idealized youth in the form of a pink and pretty Letty and a handsome, dreamy, infatuated Arthur, the whole being softly but richly lit. As if to complete the Dutch connection, there is a copy of the Dutch translation of *Adam Bede* (1870), with an engraving of Letty.

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METAPHORS
We Live By

George Lakoff and Mark Johnson

The authors show that our ordinary, everyday language is metaphorical in ways we do not usually notice; that we customarily perceive, think, and act in terms of metaphorical concepts that we are not directly aware of; and that our most basic concepts of love, work, time, status, happiness, health, and communication are understood metaphorically. December 1980. £7.50.

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO PRESS
126 Buckingham Palace Road, London SW1W 9SD

circle; indeed, Spencer is put in his place by the organizers, who have included both a caricature of him by P. C. Gould made for *Vanity Fair* in 1879 and Spencer's extraordinary portrait from indicating (in 1901) that his state of health allowed him to undertake "an extremely small amount of work" and on no account permitted him to reply to letters.

George Eliot's relationship with Lewes is well represented. Most of it takes the form of examples from Lewes's interesting correspondence with Blackwood, negotiating terms for his "clerical friend", author of *Scenes of Clerical Life*, and later encouraging Blackwood's tactful criticisms of the work in progress. There is Lewes's ingenious attempt to get a higher rate of royalties for *Silas Marner* on the ground of its being shorter than the previous novels and therefore less expensive to print; also the defection from Blackwood to Smith, Elder, who paid £7,000 for *Romola* (the only novel not to sell magnificently, as it turned out); finally, Lewes's suggestion of a new form of publication for *Middlemarch*, which appeared in bi-monthly parts.

There is not much evidence of her social life. Thackeray's pencil sketch from 1844 of Agnes Lewes at the piano, watched by Lewes and Thornton Hunt, is an eloquent visual aid to the story of Lewes's marriage and its break-up. But there is nothing about the three sons, Charles, Thomas and Herbert, to whom George Eliot became "Mutter", and to whose is conveyed of her harrowing experiences as she began to write *Middlemarch* in 1869, when Thorne, having come home in a wretched state from Nepal, painfully wasted away and died, nursed by Lewes and George Eliot. Some gestures are made towards illustrating their internationalism. As a gloss to the story of their flight to Weimar in 1854 there is an engraving of Goethe's house. But little attempt is made to suggest the cosmopolitan contacts they acquired there, though such a suggestion would have been valuable as a context for the international scope of Daniel Deronda.

On the whole, then, this retrospective of George Eliot is a cautious, traditional, almost idealizing one: a view further borne out by the pictorial elements in the exhibition, of which there are two, understandably but regrettably comparatively few. Apart from Queen Victoria's paintings, some Victorian rural scenes indicative of the backdrop to the early "English novels, and some woodcuts for *Romola*, the most interesting exhibits are the two preliminary drawings by Samuel Laurence for the portrait commissioned by Lewes in 1860. This was subsequently rejected by Lewes, bought instead by Blackwood, and is now lost.

One of the drawings is the well-known, melancholy study now at Giron College. The other is a surprising, full-face drawing (most portraits of George Eliot are three-quarter views, presumably to disguise her heavy jaw-line), in which her face looks much shorter, fuller, and older than photographs and other more familiar portraits suggest. There is also a study, thought to be of her head, by Frederick William Burton, purchased for the British Museum's Department of Prints and Drawings by Sidney Colvin (one of George Eliot's most acute contemporary critics). It is a severe, classical, yet idealized view: the eyes widened and enlarged and the nose and chin shortened. The complete absence of photographs here reinforces one's impression that this exhibition presents George Eliot with her best face forward.

The unaffected Spencer, as we know, remained bachelor, and Marian Evans switched her attention to Lewes, whom she had recently met in the Spencer-Chapman - Westminster Review

Christmas Triolet

It's Christmas, season of wild bells
And merry carols. On the floor
Are gifts in pretty paper shells.
It's Christmas, season of wild Belle's
Big party. George's stomach swells
With ale; his wife's had even more.
It's Christmas, season of wild bells,
And merry Carol's on the floor.

Wendy Cope

Oxford
University PressKandinsky: The
Development of an
Abstract Style

Rose-Carol Washton Long
Kandinsky, one of the pioneers of the abstract movement in art, was faced with the dilemma of having to demonstrate his rejection of materialism without at the same time alienating the wider public. His attempts to resolve this dilemma form the basis of this book, which places Kandinsky's special development of the abstract style in its philosophical and cultural context. Illustrated £40
Oxford Studies in the History of Art and Architecture

A History of Hull

Edward Gillett and the late
Kenneth A. MacMahon

Throughout its history Hull was primarily a port, and this book therefore pays close attention to foreign trade, commercial custom, ships, and warfare at sea. Since the eighteenth century the town has developed its own industries. During both wars it suffered major damage. Its fishing industry was once one of its most characteristic features and its origins and developments are treated at some length. Illustrated £12

The Theatre and
its Critics in
Seventeenth-
Century France

Henry Phillips

This book is a study of attitudes towards the theatre as a force for good or evil in society in seventeenth-century France. The author analyses contemporary dramatic theorists and playwrights' attitudes to possibilities for moral instruction in the theatre as well as the strong and prejudiced reaction to drama by religious moralists and theologians. £12
Oxford Modern Language and Literature Monographs

1204: The Unholy
Crusade

John Godfrey

The author sees the conquest of Constantinople in 1204 as the culmination of a number of trends which had developed through the twelfth century. He sets the disastrous Fourth Crusade against its historical background. Its personalities are brought vividly to life and the book follows the lurching course of their expedition from its quadrelsome assembly in Venice to its unholy, greedy, and destructive finale. Illustrated £12.50

The People's
Budget 1909-10Lloyd George and
Liberal Politics

Bruce K. Murray

This is the first full-scale study of the genesis, passage, and impact of the "People's Budget" and is based on important new material. The author highlights Lloyd George's long battle to secure the Budget against formidable opposition, including its rejection by the Lords, and carefully examines the political and fiscal considerations that inspired the Budget. £17.50

Bed and board

By Jennifer Moody

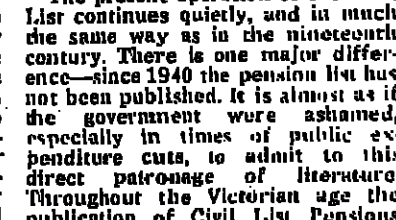
MARGARET POWELL,
First Love, Last Love
164pp. Duckworth, £6.95
0 7156 1505 X

STEPHEN GRAY:
Cultrop's Desire
1.5pp. Rex Collings. £5.50.
0 86016 108 X

Mike's London streets are presented as backdrops to the action with any amount of pathetic fallacy. There is an account of a seagull, very briefly described, which we are told stands for freedom but is also a scavenger. An intermittent desire to encounter appears in Mike's wife (in fact, her at about 38 months) and the speed at which events are unrolled, sometimes very funny; but the deadly seriousness of the main theme is in the unmissable — one paragraph — nearly half a bottle of whisky. "How much longer, Michael?" is the question of the problems of London. *Goodbye, Mr. Tombs*

By Nigel Cross

Another of Asquith's dinner guests was Edward Marsh, editor of



Disappointingly though, literature's share of the list has in recent years declined from the pre-war norm of 40 per cent. James Callaghan allocated 26.5 per cent to literature, the smallest proportion in the history of Civil List Pensions. Mrs Thatcher has allocated 35 per cent of the available funds to authors.

Finally there can be no complaint about the quality of applicants. Most of the people would be delighted to learn that in the last ten years pensioners have been awarded to Hugh MacDiarmid, Antonia White, Jean Rhys and Eric Partridge to name only the deceased. Among today's pensioners are some of the best and most distinguished poets, including W. S. Graham and George Barker. However, as funds are now so scarce, the writers under sixty years of age are rarely if ever pensioned.

It would be a pity if major and minor writers were denied the crumbs of comfort which the Civil List Pensions provide. As Mr Barkekele says, "although this state patronage might well be open to severe and serious objections, nevertheless it

the negroism of expedience and whimsy and places it where it properly belongs, which is in a cradle on the doorstep of the Paria." What is needed of course is more money, otherwise a valuable if eccentric means of support for literature will be further eroded, having already dropped by over five hundred per cent from its Halcyon days, to the point where it will no longer exist.

with J. G. Sharps

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Illustrated

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personal script
Mayer, editor

University Press
Manchester M13 9PL

It has been argued that the state has provided for authors and artists through the DISS and the establishment of the Arts Council. It is true that the latter has improved the lot of most people, but it still falls short of adequate in its relationship with the self-employed. And the Arts Council, in this year's annual report, admitted that its grants were insufficient candidates for Writers' grants who fulfilled the conditions of both merit and need. As a result the Council awarded £1,050 to 1,650 writers in 1970 (an average of £2,050 each) out of its allocation of £130,000. This year's Civil List Pensions included two new pensions and several increases, but a heavy accumulation of grants depending on literary pensions to £25,000 shared by forty-one pensioners (£600 each). If the Arts Council's surplus of £70,000 were divided among forty-two pensioners whose merit and need have been established, then the value of a 1980 Civil List Pension would rise to £2,300, approaching the Victorian

This is not to imply any criticism of the current operation of the list. It is administered sympathetically and effectively and after full consultation with the Royal Literary Fund, the Poetry Society, the Society of Authors and other interested parties. The influence of the Prime Minister over the list appears to be confined to deciding the amounts to be allocated to the different categories.

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It would be a pity if major and minor writers were denied the crumbs of comfort which the Civil List Pensions provide. As Mr Barker says, "although this state patronage is not without its drawbacks and serious objections, nevertheless it elevates the whole subject out of the mires of expedience and whimsy and places it where it properly belongs, in the domain of the domestic support of the Poet." What is needed of course is more money, otherwise a valuable if eccentric means of support for literature will be further eroded. I have friends who have lost a hundred pounds each from its halcyon days, to the point where it will no longer exist.

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rait in letters
le with J. G. Sharps

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